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Wii

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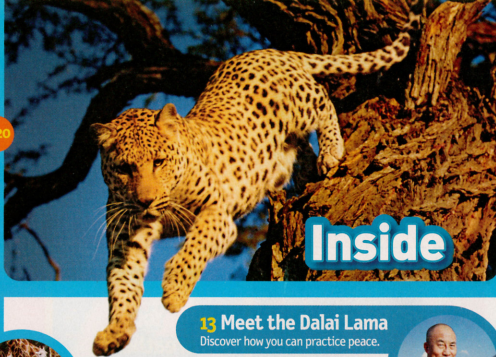
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Go online to play games, watch Guinness World Records videos, and see the winning photos and essay excerpts from the Hands-On Explorer Challenge contest. kids.nationalgeographic.com



On the Cover

The leopard depends on its awesome superstrength to survive in the wild.

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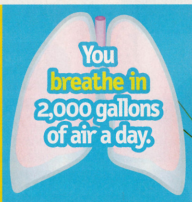


BY MARILYN TERRELL

Check out these 9 outrageous facts.



Bats have
thumbs.



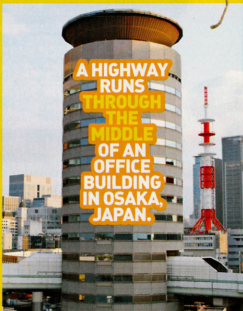
You
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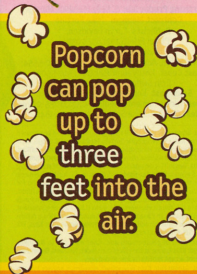
Some
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are on their
wings.



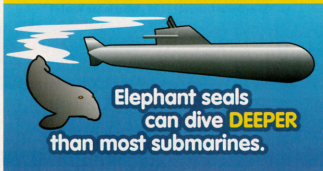
THE
RECORD FOR
**OMELET
FLIPPING**
IS 30 FLIPS
IN 34
SECONDS.



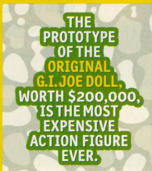
A HIGHWAY
RUNS
THROUGH
THE
MIDDLE
OF AN
OFFICE
BUILDING
IN OSAKA,
JAPAN.



Popcorn
can pop
up to
three
feet into the
air.



Elephant seals
can dive **DEEPER**
than most submarines.



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OF THE
ORIGINAL
G.I. JOE DOLL,
WORTH \$200,000,
IS THE MOST
EXPENSIVE
ACTION FIGURE
EVER.



A camel can drink
500 cups
of water
in ten
minutes.

COOL inventions

BY DOUGLAS E. RICHARDS

PART HELICOPTER, PART PLANE

You're due at your grandparents' house in less than two hours. And they live 400 miles away! Good thing your family has a Falx Air Tilt Wing chopper in the backyard. Since this aircraft—a prototype for now—doesn't need a runway, you're ready to fly at a moment's notice. Just tilt the wings and propellers up to face the sky and take off straight up, like a helicopter. Once you're in the air, tilt the wings and propellers forward to fly like a plane. The lightweight aircraft has a hybrid electric motor that reduces noise and saves on fuel. And flying at more than 200 miles an hour, you'll land in your grandparents' driveway with a few minutes to spare.



LASER SCISSORS

You've just cut out a border for your school project when, *argh*, it's all crooked! Time to start over—again. This time don't just get a new piece of paper. Get a new pair of scissors as well. Laser scissors. A red laser beam shoots from the handle of these scissors, marking a perfectly straight line across wrapping paper, construction paper, fabric, and anything else you might want to cut. Just follow the laser and you'll never cut a crooked line again. Now *that's* cutting-edge technology!



CUT A STRAIGHT LINE!

POWER SUIT

Strap on the XOS Exoskeleton, and suddenly you can have superhuman strength and endurance. This computerized metal suit, a prototype right now, allows you to lift objects weighing hundreds of pounds over and over again—without even breathing hard. Sensors in the robot measure the movements of your hands, arms, and legs, some as often as several thousand times each second. In this way, the powered suit instantly copies your every movement. A firefighter wearing an XOS could effortlessly move heavy wreckage or carry multiple people away from danger. And you could use the suit to help your parents move the piano or lift furniture, or do anything else that, um, suits you.



green scene

BY JILL YAWORSKI

FOOD FOR YOUR GARDEN!

Grow a healthy garden and reduce waste by using leftovers to make your own compost, which is organic material that adds nutrients to the soil.

RECYCLE THE NATURAL WAY

By composting, you reduce the need for chemical fertilizers in your yard and you send less waste to landfills. Yard trimmings and food scraps make up about 25 percent of the trash from cities and towns in the United States. So put that banana peel to good use. Turn it—and a lot of other things in your trash can—into environmentally helpful compost. By making natural fertilizer, you will help the environment *and* have a great excuse to play with your food!

HOW TO MAKE COMPOST

- 1 Choose a dry, shady spot to create your compost pile.
- 2 Use a bin with a tight-fitting lid and plenty of airholes to hold your compost ingredients. In the bin, start with a six-inch layer of dry "brown" material (see examples in list above, right). Break down large pieces before you place them in the bin.
- 3 Add a three-inch layer of "green" materials (see list). Add a little bit of soil to this layer.
- 4 Mix the brown and green layers.
- 5 Finish with another three-inch layer of brown materials.
- 6 Add water until the contents are moist. If you accidentally add too much water, just add more brown materials to the bin. Mix your compost pile every week or two.
- 7 After one to four months, the compost will be almost ready. When it is dark brown and moist, and you can't identify the original ingredients, wait two more weeks. Then add your finished compost to your garden.

COMPOST THESE

"BROWN" MATERIALS

Dead leaves
Eggshells
Twigs
Shredded newspaper
Nutshells

"GREEN" MATERIALS

Grass clippings
Fruit and vegetable scraps
Coffee grounds
Tea bags

GROW
VEGGIES AND
FLOWERS



For more about helping
the Earth, go online.
preservourplanet.com

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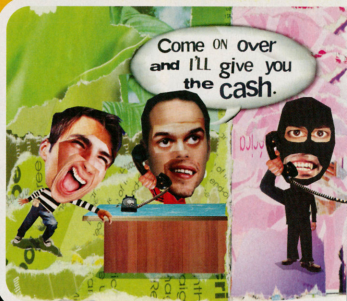
Stupid Criminals

BUSTED!


Locked Out

STANTON, TEXAS

This guy may have thought he was being smart when he locked his getaway car before robbing a drugstore. There was just one problem: The keys were inside, and the car was running. Sprinting out of the store, the robber found he couldn't open his car door and dashed away on foot. Police finally caught him, but he still had his vehicle on his mind. "Would you take care of my car?" he asked police. "It's running, and the keys are in it." Guess they were more interested in locking him up than unlocking his car.



Dumpster Diving

DILLON, SOUTH CAROLINA

This crook got caught between a Dumpster and a hard place. He had broken into a junkyard to steal copper wiring and crawled underneath a Dumpster to get it. But once he squeezed in far enough, he couldn't wriggle out! The robber spent the whole night underneath the trash container, and police had to use air bags to lift it high enough to get him out. It's not often that criminals are grateful to the police who arrest them—but this one probably was.



Calling All Crooks

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

You shouldn't hand out your phone number to just anybody—especially someone you're trying to rob. While holding up an auto supply shop, a crook discovered that the employees didn't have any cash. He figured the boss would have more money on him. But the boss hadn't come in yet, and the bad guy didn't want to wait. So he gave the employees his phone number. "You better call me when the boss comes," he said before he left. The employees fooled him, and called police before they called the crook. When he showed up, the boss was waiting—and so were the cops.

ASTONISHING
STORIES FROM
THE FILES OF

Guinness World Records

Go online for more information about Guinness World Records! kids.nationalgeographic.com/Videos

REALLY LONG DOG

Talk about being allowed a long leash. This dog actually needs one! Mon Ami von der Oelmühle is the longest living dog on record. The Irish wolfhound measures more than seven and a half feet from nose to tail tip, longer than most professional basketball players are tall. The breed's friendly, gentle nature may explain his name: *Mon Ami* means "my friend" in French.



SMALL ROBOT

BeRobot has an impressive slate of tricks for measuring only six inches tall. The smallest humanoid robot in production can walk, kick, play soccer, and even do push-ups. The toy reassembles as creatures such as a dog or snake and is controlled by voice or remote. Just don't step on it!



BOARD-OM BUSTER



This guy must be really hardheaded. Kevin Shelley holds the record for the most wooden toilet seats broken with the head. The secret to his ability to crack 46 lids in one minute is to drop half the seat after the other one flies backward. But Shelley has another secret: He has a black belt in tae kwon do and has been busting boards with his head for years.

YOU CAN HELP SET A GUINNESS WORLD RECORD!

SEND US YOUR OLD JEANS!

IT TAKES ABOUT
500 PAIRS OF
JEANS TO RECYCLE
ENOUGH DENIM TO
INSULATE ONE
AVERAGE-SIZE U.S.
HOUSE. SO SEND
US LOTS!

HELP US CREATE THE WORLD'S LARGEST COLLECTION OF CLOTHES TO RECYCLE.

Jeans will be donated to "COTTON FROM BLUE TO GREEN." This denim drive recycles jeans into UltraTouch insulation, which is used to help build houses in places that have been damaged by hurricanes, tornadoes, and other natural disasters. Your jeans will help set a record, keep clothes out of landfills, and build homes for families to live in!



FOLLOW THESE RULES TO HELP US SET THE RECORD.

- 1 Get a parent's permission and select as many denim jeans as you like. (Any denim clothing is OK.)
- 2 The denim must be used.
- 3 The denim can be any brand.
- 4 The denim can be any color or size but must have been worn by a human.
- 5 Send as many jeans or denim items as you wish for.

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UltraTouch
Insulation



JEANS MUST BE RECEIVED

BY JUNE 30, 2009.

Go online to guess how many denim
items we will receive for the record!
kids.nationalgeographic.com

HELP US KEEP COUNT BY INCLUDING THIS FORM WITH EACH PACKAGE!

Parent / guardian's name (please print)

Adult leader's name and organization (for school drives, Scouts, etc.)

City / State

Number of denim items in this package

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May is Get Caught Reading month and the perfect time to plan your summer reading list! Get Caught Reading is a nationwide campaign to remind people of all ages how much fun it is to read! So if an adult catches you curled up with a good book, fill out the card between these pages and send it in for a chance to win some hot new titles! Fifty (50) winners will be randomly selected to win these hot prizes!



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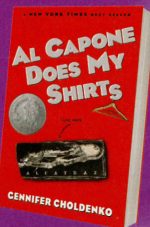
Al Capone Does My Shirts

By Gennifer Choldenko

Alcatraz—not your typical neighborhood. Not your typical neighbors. It's 1935 and twelve-year-old Moose Flannagan and his family have just moved to the island that's home to notorious criminals. All Moose wants to do is protect his autistic sister, Natalie, live up to his parents' expectations, and stay out of trouble. But on Alcatraz, trouble is never very far away.

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**The Stoneheart Trilogy, Book Three: Silvertongue**

by Charlie Fletcher

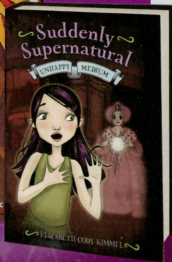
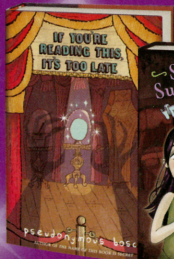
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WIN BIG! Check out the postcard between these pages for official rules and how to WIN great prizes. Go online to www.kidsblogs.nationalgeographic.com/dogearred/ to check out more Get Caught Reading fun!



Bet you
**didn't
know**

BY KIMBERLY FORKNER

7 wacky facts about the **World**

1 The
**50 tallest
mountains**
in the world
are all in
Asia.

2 The **lowest
temperature**
on Earth (-128.6°F)
was recorded in
Antarctica.

3 The
surface
of the Atlantic
Ocean is
saltier
than the surface of
the Pacific Ocean.

4 The
**Great Wall
of China**
spans roughly
4,500 miles—that's
almost as long as
the continent of
Africa.

5 About two-
thirds of all known
tornadoes
in the world occur
in the **United
States.**

6 The minute
hand on
**London's
Big Ben**
clock travels about
118 miles a year.

7 **Oregon's
D River** is
only 120 feet long—
shorter than an
Olympic-size
swimming pool.

Meet the Dalai Lama



What if you became the **leader of your people** when you were just 15 years old? That's what happened to Lhamo Thondup, known as the Dalai Lama. In 1950 he became the **political leader of Tibet**, now a part of China. But the Dalai Lama is more than just the head of his government. Promoting **peace, compassion, and tolerance**, he is also the spiritual leader of millions of people. Here's what he told NG KIDS about being a hero for peace.

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC KIDS: You work with an organization called PeaceJam, in which Nobel Peace Prize winners like you **inspire kids** to find peaceful solutions to problems. How can kids really help **solve problems** such as poverty and terrorism through peace?

THE DALAI LAMA: You need **patience and determination**. Study and become an expert in something, because education can bring **compassion, peace, and harmony**. That will bring self-confidence and stability. When you have all that, then you can **influence others** as an example. That's the way to create more peaceful communities.

NGK: Can one kid really **make a difference** in the world?

THE DALAI LAMA: Yes. Because if **everyone works hard**, we can all make a difference.

NGK: How can **kids promote peace** in their everyday lives?

THE DALAI LAMA: Look at situations from all angles, and you will become more open. **We all have to live together**, so we might as well live together happily. Realizing this helps you feel as if **this whole world is one home**.

NGK: You began your training as the Dalai Lama when you were just 5 years old, but you still had time to play. What was your **favorite game** as a child?

THE DALAI LAMA: I made friends with **two white mice** who would always **sneak into my room** while I was studying, and they would **try to distract me**.

NGK: You have been recognized for your concern about the environment. Why is it so important to **protect the planet**?

THE DALAI LAMA: We need to **care for every part of the Earth** and the life upon it, because this affects **future generations**.

NGK: What are some of your **favorite green tips** that kids can use to help save the environment?

THE DALAI LAMA: When you leave your room, **switch off the light**. Recycle garbage—this one is easy! **The most important thing** is that these simple practices become a **part of your daily life**. Then together we can make a big impact.

ONE WORLD

The Dalai Lama tells you how to practice these important human values for a more peaceful planet.

COMPASSION

RECOGNIZE OTHERS AS BROTHERS AND SISTERS WHO HAVE EVERY RIGHT TO OVERCOME THEIR PROBLEMS—JUST LIKE YOU DO.

FORGIVENESS

LEARN FROM MISTAKES—WHETHER THEY ARE YOURS OR OTHERS—AND TRY NOT TO REPEAT THEM IN THE FUTURE. FORGIVE YOURSELF AND OTHERS SO THAT MISTAKES ARE NOT REPEATED.

TOLERANCE

YOU WON'T ALWAYS AGREE WITH OR GET ALONG WITH EVERYONE. BUT YOUR FUTURE IS WITH THESE PEOPLE. SO DEVELOP A SENSE OF CARING, TOLERANCE, OR COMPASSION FOR EVERYONE, EVEN THOSE YOU DON'T GET ALONG WITH.

CONTENTMENT

IT'S A MISTAKE TO PLACE ALL OUR HOPES FOR HAPPINESS ON MATERIAL GAINS. SO BE SATISFIED WITH WHATEVER YOU HAVE, AND YOU WILL HAVE MORE INNER PEACE.

FIND OUT HOW TO PROMOTE PEACE BY READING **PEACEJAM: A BILLION SIMPLE ACTS OF PEACE**. BY IVAN SUVANJEFF AND DAWN GIFFORD ENGLE.

video game CENTRAL

BY MARK MACDONALD

LAUGH OUT LOUD!

Everyone enjoys a good laugh. Movies, books, and TV shows can make you giggle, and so can some video games.



CRASH: MIND OVER MUTANT

Xbox 360, Nintendo DS and Wii, PS2, PSP

Crash is one of the goofiest video game critters

of all. Who could forget the sly look on his face

before he jumps on a pig and rides it through a level, or that hilarious

belly flop move when he falls flat on his face? Well, this time you and a friend can laugh along, since a second player can join in *Mind Over Mutant* and play as Crash's sister, Coco. Together you can take control of different mutants and use their powers—like Louie's floating jump—on your way to stopping that nasty Dr. Cortex once again.



>> TIP #1 In the pause menu, hold block and quickly press the D-pad left, left, left, and down to make different parts of Crash's body huge.

>> TIP #2 Also in the pause menu, hold block and quickly press the D-pad down, down, down, and up to make Crash freeze his enemies every time he touches them.

>> TIP #1 In the "Mega Balls" mini-game, instead of just collecting dots, make time to push your rivals into areas where they will get stuck—you'll earn more points in the long run.

>> TIP #2 If you have a Wii Balance Board, try bending your knees and pushing down in the mini-game "Incredible But Stupid." Your Rabbid will do something funny (and a little rude!) for a burst of speed.

RAYMAN RAVING RABBIDS TV PARTY

Wii

Here's a game you play using your rear end...how can that not be funny? Those crazy Rabbid bunnies are back, and this time they've invaded your TV. You and up to three friends can challenge each other to take them out in 50-plus mini-games—everything from *Dancing With Dweebs* to professional wrestling—that poke fun at your favorite TV shows and movies. If you have the Wii Balance Board, you can even ski your way down a mountain by sitting on it and leaning whichever way you want to turn.



NINJATOWN



Nintendo DS
Ninjas aren't generally known for being funny, but the Wee Ninjas of *Ninjabatown* will definitely put a smile on your face. They all have special abilities to help you defend their town from the evil Mr.

Demon and his followers. Help cranky Ol' Master Ninja blow away his enemies by actually blowing into the DS' microphone using the "Get Off My Lawn!" technique. Or try the "Magnifryer," which you aim with the touch screen to heat up anyone unlucky enough to wander into its path.



>> TIP #1 Build your Forest Ninja Huts in pairs, and the Ninjas inside will team up for maximum wasabi

pea-shooting firepower.
>> TIP #2 Try tearing down the buildings you start with on any map to find extra cookies. You can always rebuild the town later any way you like.



Just Joking

Elephant seal



KNOCK,
KNOCK.

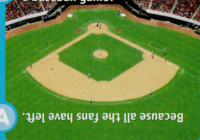
Who's there?
Adair.
Adair who?
Adair once, but
now I'm bald.



Q Why did the smashed banana say when an elephant sat on it?

A Nothing. Bananas don't talk.

Q Why did it get hot after a baseball game?



A Because all the fans have left.

You've got to be joking...

Q Why did the guy put a stove in his car?



To make a hot rod.

JOHNNY TEST

IS NOW AVAILABLE ON DVD!



DVD VIDEO



AS SEEN ON

CN
CARTOON NETWORK



COOKIE JAR

N. GURIE

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NATIONAL
GEOGRAPHIC

INTERNATIONAL PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST 2008 FOR KIDS

Winners!

Last year we asked you to show us your world through photos—and many of you did. More than 15,000 readers of 15 NGK editions around the world participated in the contest. First Place Winners from all the countries moved on to the International Competition to compete for the Grand Prize—a trip to Washington, D.C. Check out the Grand Prize photograph, along with the First and Second Place Winners from the United States and Canada.

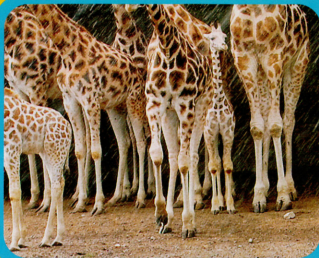
Simon van Lierde, 12, The Hague, Netherlands

**GRAND
PRIZE**



Go online to see photo contest winners from around the world. kids.nationalgeographic.com/Photos

ANIMALS

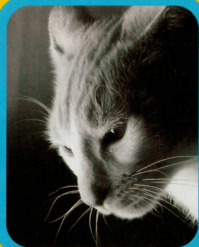


FIRST PLACE

Muhammad Humza
Kafeel, 9
Mississauga,
Ontario, Canada

SECOND PLACE

Joshua Soda, 8
Denver,
Colorado



PEOPLE

FIRST PLACE

Ben Jasek, 12
Crown Point,
Indiana



SECOND PLACE

Madeline Adams-Gurowitz, 7
Montclair, New Jersey

SCENERY

FIRST PLACE

Carolyn Faye
Twiersky, 12
Easton,
Connecticut



SECOND PLACE

Ben Jasek, 12
Crown Point,
Indiana



LOOK FOR DETAILS ABOUT THE NEXT NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC INTERNATIONAL PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST FOR KIDS
IN YOUR AUGUST 2009 ISSUE!

Amazing Animals

These cats like being dressed up, but yours may not. Never force your pet to do something it does not like to do.

I DON'T MEAN TO BE CATTY, BUT I AM ONE "PURR-TY" FASHION MODEL.

Orion the cat models his Hawaiian beachwear at the feline fashion show.

CATS BECOME MODELS!

New York City, New York

Dressed up like a tourist in Hawaii, Orion the cat strutted his stuff. As he struck a pose, he was joined by ten other fashionable felines strolling down the runway. The cats made perfect models during the Feline Fashion Show at New York City's famous Algonquin Hotel. The event raised \$2,000 for North Shore Animal League America and also celebrated the 13th birthday of the hotel's resident cat, Matilda, who greets hotel guests from her plush chaise lounge in the lobby. As Matilda watched the show, Max prowled by dressed in denim duds, and Kashmir twirled in a ballerina costume. Elvis the savannah cat even shook up the runway twice, first in a white spangled jumpsuit followed by a black leather biker jacket. Was that Elvis meowing the loudest when everyone sang "Happy Birthday" to Matilda at the show's end?



The most popular breed of cat is the Persian.

WHERE
DID I PUT
THAT
WRAPPING
PAPER?

BY KRISTIN BAIRD RATTINI



BEAR GIVES GIFT

Bedfordshire, England

Can a bear be nice? This bear stole a hubcap off one car and offered it to another driver!

Georgie the bear was showing off for visitors in their cars at Woburn Safari Park when he suddenly approached a vehicle. Using his long claws, he popped the hubcap right off the wheel. With the hubcap in his mouth, Georgie then walked over to the next car, which was missing its hubcap. Azra Noonari watched as the bear dropped the hubcap next to her car, then banged his paw on her window. "It was as if Georgie were trying to give her a hubcap," says Cheryl Williams, who works at the park.

A ranger quickly shooed Georgie away and gave the hubcap back to its original owner. Williams thinks that Georgie wasn't really being generous but just saw his reflection in the shiny hubcap. "Still, when a bear does anything you wouldn't expect," Williams says, "you can bet it's Georgie."

Feline Fashionistas

Georgie

Billie

SMART DOLPHIN

Port Adelaide, Australia

People can't make heads or tails out of this behavior: Billie the bottlenose dolphin tail-walks in the wild, even though she was never taught the trick.

Wild dolphins rarely tail-walk—there's no scientific advantage for it. Human trainers must teach a dolphin to perform the trick on command. Scientist Mike Bossley, who's been studying Billie since she was three, thinks she learned it when she spent a few weeks at an aquarium to recover from malnutrition and observed the resident trained dolphins tail-walking. Amazingly, Billie may have remembered what she saw after she was released back into the wild, and then performed the trick with no commands from humans. Even stranger is that Billie's friend, Wave, seems to have learned to tail-walk by watching Billie. "I keep trying to figure out a reason," Bossley says. "But they may be doing it just because they enjoy it."



FOR MY
NEXT TRICK,
I WILL CATCH
A FISH WITH
MY BARE
FLIPPERS.

Dolphins have
been known to
dive underwater
for up to ten
minutes.

LEOPARD

NATURE'S

SUPERCATS

**THIS POWERFUL ANIMAL
RELIES ON ITS STRENGTH.**

BY CRISPIN BOYER

Tjololo the leopard is playing tug-of-war in a tree, and he's in no mood to lose. His opponents: two hyenas that had darted out of the night to swipe Tjololo's freshly killed impala. Not about to let the hyenas steal his meal, Tjololo (pronounced cha-LO-lo) did what leopards do best: He grasped the impala in his powerful jaws and carried it straight up the tree. But the persistent hyenas leapt after the carcass and locked onto its legs with their teeth.

Now it's a battle of strength fought in the crook of a tree. Can the leopard maintain his grip on nearly twice his weight in dead impala and dangling hyenas long enough for the scavengers to give up? "He's just up there hanging onto all of this and thinking, 'Please, guys, just eat those feet and give me the rest,'" says wildlife filmmaker Kim Wolhuter, who witnessed the standoff while filming Tjololo in a South African game preserve.

Power Struggle

Eventually, the hyenas chewed through part of the kill and fell to the ground, leaving Tjololo to clamber higher and enjoy his hard-earned dinner. Up in the tree's thinner branches, Tjololo is untouchable. No big cat is more at home in a tree than a leopard. "Lions can climb trees," says Wolhuter, "but they're so big they fall all over the place. Leopards are just amazing up there. Each foot is always on a branch. They just know their way around. They even use their tails to help keep their balance."

It's in the trees that leopards often reveal their trademark strength. Leopards have been seen hauling struggling buffalo calves twice their weight up the trunks of trees two stories high. That would be like you climbing a ladder while carrying your dad or big brother—with your teeth! The cats scramble skyward not only to hide prey from scavengers or escape from lions, but also to mount attacks from tree limbs, pouncing on unsuspecting prey below.





S

A hyena's chance to steal a leopard's kill ends after the cat gets its prey up a tree. Ever hopeful, the hyena waits nearby in case a piece of meat drops to the ground.



Powerful Prowler

Leopards may be the smallest of the so-called “big cats”—a classification that includes lions, tigers, and jaguars—but they’re amazingly strong for their size. They have muscular necks and stocky legs made for pouncing and climbing rather than speed. Their massive heads pack powerful jaws. One scientist saw a leopard take down an animal 12 times its weight. Imagine your dad stopping a compact car by leaping on it!

Yet despite all that power, leopards are masters of stealth. They stalk with the grace of a much smaller cat, tiptoeing on the pads of their paws and creeping ghostlike through the brush until they’re close enough to pounce on prey. Their spotted fur blends with trees, grass, and shadows, making the animals nearly invisible. Able to see well in the dark, leopards can even hunt at night.

Dark Cats

Not all leopards are born with tawny spotted coats. Some are all black. People sometimes call these dark-furred leopards “black panthers.” Black leopards can be born in the same litter as normal-colored leopards. If you look closely, you’ll even see that black leopards have spots—they’re just very dark.





The leopard's spot patterns, like human fingerprints, are different for every animal and can be used to help identify them.

Adaptable Feline

Not all leopards spend their lives in trees. In areas without such persistent scavengers or large predators, the cats are perfectly happy hiding their dinners in the brush. This ability to adapt—which even includes subtle variations in coat color to match surrounding terrain—has helped the leopard become the most widespread member of the cat species. You'll find leopards throughout most of the southern half of Africa and across much of Asia, from dense jungles to snowy mountains to sprawling grasslands called savannas.



This zebra is too big to become this cat's dinner, but something smaller may come by. Leopards are patient, stealthy hunters.

Perhaps the biggest reason for the leopard's success is that it's not a picky eater. The cats adapt their diet to whatever prey is plentiful. They'll go after crocodiles, zebras, and other big animals. But the size of their prey varies a lot: rodents, hares, lizards—no meal is too small for this wild cat.

Leopards can swim well if they need to, and sometimes they seem to have fun playing in water. However, they do not enjoy swimming as much as tigers do.



Scientists think that the white on the underside of a leopard's tail may help cubs following their mother keep her in sight.

The snow leopard and the clouded leopard share the same name, but leopards actually are more closely related to lions, tigers, and jaguars.

NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM:

BATTLE OF THE SMITHSONIAN

BY JOHINNA RIZZO

Larry may not be a museum security guard anymore, but he's still dealing with a magical tablet that brings museum exhibits to life. In *Night at the Museum: Battle of the Smithsonian* (the sequel to the 2006 movie) an evil pharaoh wants to steal the tablet to take over the world. It's up to Larry and his famous historical friends to stop him. Are the movie characters straight from the history books, or are they more fiction than fact? NG KIDS reveals the truth.

CRYSTAL THE CAPUCHIN MONKEY

plays two rascals—Able and Dexter—that torment Larry. For her scenes, director Shawn Levy combed Crystal's fur two different ways, then shot each scene twice—once with each hairdo. He then combined the two scenes using a computer.



PROJECT RUNWAY

The Tuskegee Army Airplane block the path of the bad guys so that Amelia Earhart and Larry can keep the tablet out of pharaoh KahmunRah's hands. In real life, the Tuskegee Army Airplane also bravely defended their fellow heroes. Until the late 1940s the U.S. military was segregated, meaning blacks and whites did not serve together. The Tuskegee Army Airplane were a unit of African-American pilots trained to protect bomber planes during World War II. The airmen distracted enemy planes so U.S. fliers could complete their missions. "They painted the tails of their planes red," says Deanna Mitchell of the Tuskegee Army Airplane National Historic Site. "They were proud of what they accomplished."



DARK NIGHTS

Pharaoh KahMunRah tries to steal the magic tablet to unleash his creepy underworld army. Real ancient Egyptians also believed in an underworld—a scary place where souls were judged before moving on to what they hoped would be a more pleasant afterlife. According to Egyptian legend, the underworld was where the sun went at night. It traveled past fire-breathing people, multi-headed genies, and spirits that walked upside down.

THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

is actually a collection of 19 museums, many of which line the National Mall, in Washington, D.C.

MIRROR MIRROR

In the movie, General George Custer combs his long, blond hair while chanting “98...99...one beautiful man!” The real Custer, who fought in the Civil War during the 1860s, also had long, blond hair and wore a fancy uniform with a bright red necktie. But it wasn’t because he liked to look handsome, says Custer Battlefield Museum director Chris Kortlander. Back then, armies didn’t have radios or walkie-talkies. Custer needed his soldiers to be able to spot him on the battlefield. So he chose a look that would make him stand out.

NAME GAME

KahMunRah chooses Ivan the Terrible as his general because he likes his evil-sounding name. But Ivan, who in real life ruled Russia from 1547 to 1584, is upset that people think he’s a bad guy! “He claims that the real meaning of his Russian name is ‘Ivan the Awesome,’” says director Shawn Levy. What’s the real translation? David L. Ransel at Indiana University says Ivan’s “terrible” nickname really means something more like “awe-inspiring” or “stern.”

FLY GIRL

When Larry and Amelia Earhart are cornered in the Air and Space Museum by the baddies, Amelia rushes Larry to an exhibit plane and flies it right out of the museum’s front doors. The real Amelia Earhart would definitely be capable of some fancy flying. When she became the first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic Ocean in 1932, she flew at night and landed in a farmer’s field!

OGANE GREGORY/PHOTO MONKEY, AIRMEN, EARHART, KAHMUNRAH; 20TH CENTURY FOX (CUSTER); © COMSTOCK IMAGES / JUPITERIMAGES (BORDE); © JAMES DAWSON / IMAGE FARM / JUPITERIMAGES (CIRCLE FRAME); © BURKE / TRIDLO / BRAND X PICTURES / JUPITERIMAGES (SQUARE FRAME)

MYSTERY OF THE FROZEN MAMMOTH

THE DISCOVERY OF A BABY MAMMOTH REVEALS 40,000-YEAR-OLD SECRETS.

BY KRISTIN BAIRD RATTINI

The strange animal looked like it was sleeping. Ten-year-old Kostia Khudi and his brother thought it might be a reindeer and hurried through the Arctic snow to get a closer look. What they found was a creature more extraordinary than they ever could have imagined: a perfectly preserved body of a baby woolly mammoth.

These relatives of today's elephants became extinct about 4,000 years ago. So where did this calf's body come from, and how did it end up along the banks of the Yuribey River, in Siberia, a remote region in northern Russia? Luckily the brothers' family—members of a local reindeer-herding culture—alerted authorities about the find. And now scientists are using modern technology to solve the mystery of this prehistoric creature's untimely death.

AN AMAZING DISCOVERY

The female mammoth, named Lyuba, after the Khudis' mother, is one of only five well-preserved baby mammoths discovered in the past 200 years. "She's in as close to perfect condition as you can

imagine," said mammoth expert Daniel Fisher. Little tufts of fur still line her ears and ankles. Her trunk curls up slightly. And she has tiny "milk tusks," baby teeth that grow before permanent tusks form.

SECRET HISTORY

Scientists wondered when this adorable baby lived and exactly how old she was when she died. Using a process called radio-carbon dating, the investigators examined the chemistry of her body. They found out that Lyuba was born about 40,000 years ago—the time period when the most woolly mammoths walked the Earth.

Lyuba's teeth held even bigger secrets. Scientists know that mammoth teeth grow in rings, like tree trunks. Looking through



SCIENTISTS EXAMINE LYUBA.



CHILDREN POSE WITH LYUBA IN SIBERIA, A REGION IN NORTHERN RUSSIA.

To find out more, go online. kids.nationalgeographic.com



a high-powered microscope, experts counted the 30 rings that had formed on the baby's teeth since she was born. Now they had proof—Lyuba was only 30 days old when she died.

TELLING CLUES

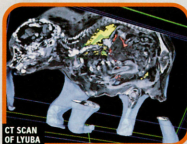
The young mammoth would have been frisky and curious at this age. Could her curiosity have gotten her in trouble? The outside of Lyuba's body showed no sign of injury. So the team placed Lyuba in a high-tech machine called a CT scanner, which created a 3-D model of her insides on a computer.

Lyuba's little trunk provided big clues.

Sediment clogged her mouth, nostrils, the base of her lungs, and her trachea—the passageway

that lets air into the lungs. At last a possible answer was in sight! Fisher thinks she fell into a mud hole. "She accidentally sucked in some mud and couldn't get any air," he said.

Lyuba's fatal mud bath could also explain how her body stayed so well preserved. The mud kept scavengers away. Plus the lack of oxygen in the mud and the Arctic's freezing temperatures prevented her body from decomposing.



THE PAST COMES ALIVE

One mystery still needed an answer: How did Lyuba turn up on the shores of that river in Siberia? Tests of the earth found under her body proved that the sediment had been washed up by the river. Fisher believes that raging spring floods forced Lyuba's frozen mud tomb to break free. Then the mud melted as it traveled downstream, allowing this Ice Age creature to wash up on a riverbank and "reappear" in the present.

Scientists have now retraced Lyuba's amazing journey, but the investigation is just beginning. By continuing to study Lyuba, the experts hope to uncover secrets about the woolly mammoth species that have been frozen in time until now.

MAMMOTHS vs. ELEPHANTS

Asian elephants are the closest living relatives of woolly mammoths. Find out how they compare.

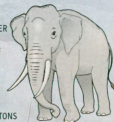
ADULT ASIAN ELEPHANT

HEIGHT: 7 TO 10 FEET AT SHOULDER

FUR: PATCHES OF THIN HAIR

TUSKS: UP TO 6 FEET LONG

WEIGHT: 4 TO 8 TONS



ADULT WOOLLY MAMMOTH

HEIGHT: 8 TO 10 FEET AT SHOULDER

FUR: THICK AND BROWN

TUSKS: UP TO 10 FEET LONG

WEIGHT: 6 TO 8 TONS



TUNE IN!
Watch *Waking the Baby Mammoth* on the NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC CHANNEL, April 26 at 9 p.m. ET/PT.

Behind the Scenes of the New Movie

Up

BY BEKAH WRIGHT

Let's say you sold balloons at the zoo and found out you were about to lose your home. What would you do? If you were Carl in the new movie *Up*, you'd tie your house to 10,000 helium balloons and fly to the most beautiful place on Earth, Paradise Falls. There's just one problem: A kid named Russell has accidentally hitched a ride. Now Carl must survive in a strange land *and* figure out how to get Russell home. Is the weird world of *Up* anything like the real one? NG KIDS finds out.



SETTING THE TABLETOP

Carl tries to land when he realizes he's flown away with Russell aboard, but a savage storm blows them off course. They land on a bizarre, cloud-shrouded mountain with a long, flat top. Called tepuis (teh-POOH-ees), tabletop mountains like this actually exist in Venezuela's Canaima National Park, which inspired moviemakers. More than a mile and a half high, the cliff-like tabletops have lush cloud forests on their slopes. Some areas are so wet that slimy algae, which thrives in moist environments, thickly coats tree trunks and branches, says tepui expert Adrian Warren.

Until the late 19th century, no one knew what was on top of tepuis. These mysterious mountains are thought to have inspired Sir Arthur Conan Doyle—who created Sherlock Holmes—who wrote *The Lost World*, a 1912 novel about a forgotten land of dinosaurs and prehistoric humans.

WATERFALL MINUS WATER

Carl is confused when he thinks the bare tepui is all there is to Paradise Falls. Then he spies the awe-inspiring waterfall in the distance. The movie's made-up waterfall is based on Venezuela's Angel Falls, the tallest waterfall on Earth. It's so high up that the water vaporizes into mist before it hits the ground 3,212 feet down. "Sometimes you can stand right under the falls and barely get wet," Warren says.

ROCK STARS

To get his house to Paradise Falls, Carl ties it to himself and Russell so they can pull it like a gigantic parade balloon. Then they maneuver through a gallery of crazy rock formations that look like turtles, birds, and people. Real tabletop mountains also have strange rock formations on top, created by wind and other weather. "There are giant boulders balancing on three-inch rocks," says Steve May, the film's supervising technical director. The natural sculptures are so eerie that natives believed evil spirits lived among the formations.



VENEZUELA'S
ANGEL FALLS



The Monster of Paradise Falls is based on several real birds. The film's artists gave the creature the legs of an ostrich, the beak and head feathers of a toucan and peacock, and the strut of a heron.



TALKING DOGS, CRAWLING TOAD

It's scary enough that Russell and Carl have to escape a pack of dogs by jumping down a cliff, rock by rock, using their balloons to slow their descent. What's even scarier is that someone has equipped the yelping dogs with high-tech collars that translate their thoughts into words. In reality, you wouldn't meet any wild or domesticated dogs on top of tepuis. The tabletops are so isolated that many animals that *do* live there aren't found anywhere else—and are pretty strange. Take one tiny South American toad called *Oreophrynella*. It crawls instead of hops!

MONSTER OR MYTH?

Carl has heard of an explorer who disappeared searching for a mythical, giant bird near Paradise Falls. Could a bird that Russell names Kevin be the Monster of Paradise Falls? We're not telling, but we can say that no such bird exists in real life. More than 60 million years ago, though, a monstrous bird did roam South America. Known as the terror bird, this flightless predator was 10 feet tall and may have run at speeds of more than 30 miles an hour.



Fun Stuff

games, laughs, and lots to do!

Having a Blast!

These expressions describe guests at this barbecue—literally! Find and circle the people in the scene who match these descriptions.

1. Joe is all ears.
2. Brittany is a barrel of laughs.
3. Gretchen bends over backward for her friends.
4. John is good at breaking the ice.
5. Jane is a backseat driver.
6. Peter just opened a can of worms.
7. Kaitlyn is getting married in two days and has cold feet.
8. Brandon is ready to hit the sack.
9. Emily is in the doghouse.
10. Jake just let the cat out of the bag.

ANSWERS ON PAGE 35

What in the World?

Play interactive "What in the World?" and other games online.
kids.nationalgeographic.com



ALOHA SPIRIT

These photographs show close-up and faraway views of things you could see in Hawaii. Unscramble the letters to identify what's in each picture. **ANSWERS ON PAGE 35**



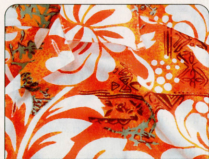
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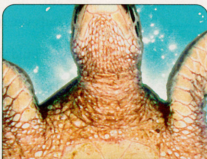
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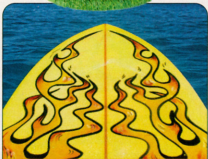
AIWAAHIN
SIRHT



ESA REUTLT



NVLA00C



DAUSRFOBR



EKUULLE

Funny FILL-IN

Stop, Thief!

BY JILL YAWORSKI

Ask a friend to give you words to fill in the blanks in this story without showing it to him or her. Then read out loud for a laugh.



Something fishy is going on. Lately things have been disappearing around my house, like my dad's

_____ household object _____, my mom's favorite _____ famous singer _____ CD, and my little sister's _____ adjective _____

_____ type of toy _____. And just today my lucky _____ type of clothing _____ vanished. Whoever the _____ adjective _____ thief was, he wasn't going to get away with this. With a magnifying _____ noun _____, I searched for

suspicious _____ body part _____ prints. I checked under the _____ piece of furniture _____, behind the big-screen

_____ electronic gadget _____, and even inside the _____ kitchen appliance _____. Then I heard a(n) _____ loud noise _____

coming from the garage. Could the thief actually be here right now? As I _____ past-tense verb _____ into the garage,

a(n) _____ adjective _____ figure darted behind the _____ type of car _____. I yelled, "_____ exclamation _____!" and started

to _____ verb _____ away, when I heard a(n) _____ animal noise _____. In a flash, my dog, _____ cartoon character _____,

_____ past-tense verb _____ out from behind the car with my _____ same type of clothing _____ in his _____ animal body part _____

And there, behind the _____ adjective _____ yard tool _____, was a big pile of my family's missing possessions. It looks like this case is officially closed.



Back Talk

Want 2 c
Space Chimps
2nite?



What do
YOU think
this chimp
is IMing?

1. Fill in the thought balloon.
2. Cut out the entire picture (or make a photocopy of it).
3. Mail it along with your name, address, phone number, and date of birth to NG KIDS, Back Talk, P.O. Box 96000, WASHINGTON, DC 20090-6000. Selection for publication in a future issue will be at the discretion of NG KIDS.

From the February Issue



Who's sitting on the remote?

Sarah Q., 11
Madison, Connecticut

Best seat in the doghouse!

Lisa K., 12
Palatine, Illinois

Can we "paws" the show?

Madeline E., 6
Los Gatos, California

It's your turn to get the snacks, Rover.

Allie D., 11
Collierville, Tennessee

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RANDOM HOUSE
CHILDREN'S BOOKS

Double Take

See if you can spot 13 differences in the two pictures. ANSWERS ON PAGE 35

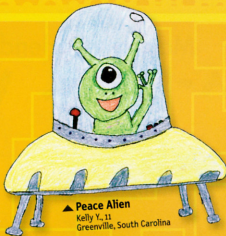
A street scene in Wimereux, a seaside town in northern France.



Art Zone

TAKE ME TO YOUR LEADER

Get ready for a close encounter with cool aliens drawn by NG KIDS readers.



▲ **Peace Alien**

Kelly Y., 11
Greenville, South Carolina



Jellyzo ▼
Kira S., 8
West Linn, Oregon

Spot the Alien ▼
Sam M., 10
Oregon, Wisconsin

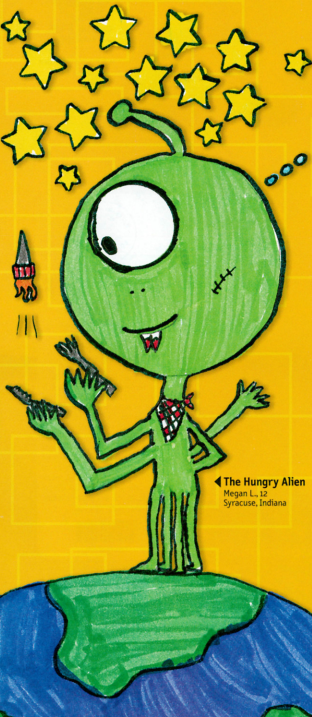


▼ **Slimeball**

Timothy R., 11
Allentown, Pennsylvania



Zorgo the Alien Who Digs Electricity
Anna V., 10
Kenner, Louisiana



▼ **The Hungry Alien**
Megan L., 12
Syracuse, Indiana

Draw yourself in a made-up TV show.

Send your original drawings to
NG KIDS—TV Show Art Zone
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Answers



"Double Take" (page 34)

Volcano, surfboard, ukulele
Dancer, dog, turtle, Bottom row:
Middle row: Hovavol, bird, bird
Top row: Hovavol, bird, bird



"Having a Blast" (page 30)

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